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## **New Animal Resource Center Finally Arrives in Harris County** *Harris County Pets Celebrates with Grand-Opening*

**HOUSTON, TX** –Harris County Public Health (HCPH) is finally unveiling its new pet resource center, Harris County Pets (HCP), which replaces the animal shelter formally known as Harris County Animal shelter that was built in 1986. The new facility was made possible on a \$24 million bond proposition that was passed by Harris County voters in 2015 as the community saw the need to replace the outdated shelter. With this new pet resource center, it will start a new era of providing expanded life-saving programs and services for pets and pet owners alike throughout Harris County.

“This is an exciting time for our community” said Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH, executive director of Harris County Public Health (HCPH). “We thank residents and elected leaders from the Harris County Commissioners Court for their support in making this fantastic facility a reality as it will provide opportunities for a healthy and safe community.”

The 50,000-square-foot facility has the capacity to house 525 animals – 300 dogs and 225 cats. This is more than double the capacity of the old shelter which only equip to hold 12,000 animals per year but was averaging 24,000. “The new Harris County Pets Resource Center will help our Veterinary Public Health Division deliver enhanced programs that will save many more pets and will allow us expand our services to both residents and to furry family members alike,” said Michael White, DVM, MS, director of Veterinary Public Health (VPH) at HCPH.

Besides allowing much-needed space to accommodate more animals, the center provides a variety of other amenities that the old facility did not have. Some of these features include:

- Indoor/outdoor kennel runs for dogs;
- Pet grooming room;
- Cat condos with separate sleeping and litter box sections;
- Separate entrances and lobbies for adoption, admission and wellness services;
- Outdoor and indoor meet-and-greet areas for potential adopters to interact with dogs;
- Indoor get-acquainted rooms for potential adopters to interact with cats; and
- No recirculation of air in the animal housing rooms, which is critical for disease control and the wellness of pets.

*HCPH is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community.*

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The old facility was recently demolished on the same property as the resource center on 612 Canino Road. Construction of a four-section dog park and pavilion is underway on the same grounds where the old shelter stood. The park is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

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**About Harris County Pets (HCP)**

*Harris County Pets, resourced by Harris County Public Health, provides veterinary care and finds forever homes for homeless pets, a pet wellness clinic for the public, zoonotic disease surveillance, responsible pet ownership education, as well as animal control services in neighborhoods throughout unincorporated Harris County. Visit our website, [www.CountyPets.com](http://www.CountyPets.com), or connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).*

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